

The Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

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WMU launches Project HELP: latest in series of need response

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — The urgency for churches to respond to the needs of children was stressed at a June 11 news conference as the Southern Baptist Convention got under way in the Louisiana Superdome and one day after Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) launched Project HELP: Child Advocacy.

WMU, with more than 1.1 million members, will seek to lead Southern Baptists to do more to serve the needs of children through volunteer projects, said WMU Executive Director Dellanna O'Brien.

Joining O'Brien in the news

conference were Richard Land, president of the Christian Life Commission, and Diana Garland of Louisville, Ky., who is helping lead a two-year study funded by the Lilly Foundation on incorporating children into the life of the church.

In its Project HELP series, WMU previously has launched emphases on hunger and AIDS. The hunger emphasis resulted in the donation of more than 1.2 million cans of food and more than \$378,000 to food ministries across the United States, O'Brien said.

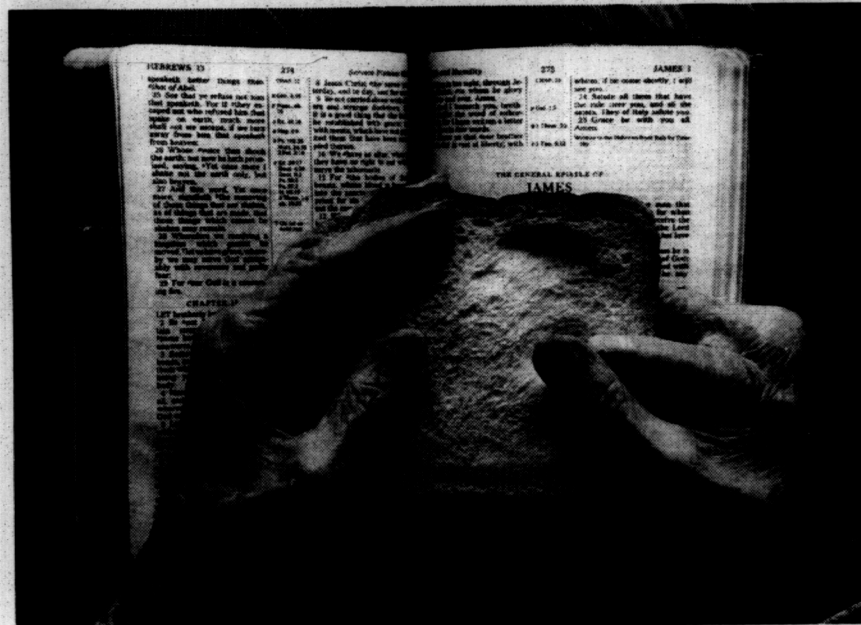
More than \$17,000 and 123,000 items have been given to

support local AIDS ministries. More than \$108,000 has been given to support House of Hope in Vitoria, Brazil, an AIDS hospice under direction of Southern Baptist foreign missionary Karen Gray.

Land said there is undeniable evidence that violence on television has dramatically increased violence in American society. He said studies of South Africa and two towns in Canada, which didn't get American television until the 1970s, showed major increases in murder and other violent acts within a few years after the advent of television.

Garland said children are growing up with fewer caring adults in their lives.

"There is a growing and deepening poverty for children who feel there is no one who cares or



Annuity Board Sunday

"Their Trust Is in God; Now They Are Counting on You" is the theme for Annuity Board Sunday, **June 23, 1996**. Frail hands and simple food resting on God's Word, open to Hebrews 13:7, remind Southern Baptists that some of those who spoke the Word of God to them are now in desperate need. The Cooperative Program and direct gifts for the Adopt An Annuitant Program provide help for nearly 2,400 retired ministers or their widows.

Messianic Fellowship introduces missionary Sibley, spurs resolution

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — For the first time since 1989, Southern Baptists have a home missionary to Jewish people.

Jim R. Sibley, appointed by the Home Mission Board, was presented June 10 to members and guests of the Messianic Fellowship at its annual meeting in the Louisiana Superdome preceding the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Sibley, who will work in the board's Interfaith Witness Depart-

ment, was a Southern Baptist representative in Israel for 13 years.

"Jim expressed his sincere hope and desire that he and the fellowship work together to reach Jewish people with the gospel," R. Michael Smith, fellowship president and an attorney in Columbus, Ohio, said in an interview after the fellowship's meeting. Smith said Sibley has expressed a desire for "a cooperative effort."

There is a great need to develop leaders for Jewish work, Smith

said. This will be done by working through local churches and seminaries.

Gus Elowitz wears a yarmulke. He is congregational leader at Beth Yeshua Hamashiach in Houston, a fellowship started in 1985 by Jerry Young as the first Southern Baptist Messianic congregation.

"The Great Commission is to the Jewish people too," Elowitz said. "Jesus said we are to go into all the world, starting with Jerusalem."



Wanda S. Lee (left) of Columbus, Ga., newly-elected president of the Woman's Missionary Union (WMU), addresses reporters June 9 in New Orleans at a press conference shortly after her election at the WMU annual meeting prior to the start of the Southern Baptist Convention. Lee, a registered nurse, was joined at the press conference by Dellanna W. O'Brien (center), WMU executive director, and Janet T. Hoffman of Hornbeck, La., newly-elected WMU recording secretary. Lee and Hoffman are eligible for five-year terms, with re-elections held annually. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

The good news is that churches aren't sued nearly as much as people believe, according to John Dudley, vice-president of property and casualty at the Southern Baptist Annuity Board in Dallas. The bad news is that could change over the next decade, he added. "Attorneys are being trained by the American Bar Association to sue churches, and they're finding out churches are the worst-run businesses around. They make easy targets," Dudley pointed out. That situation is likely to worsen in the increasingly lawsuit-prone American judicial system. Dudley advised congregations large and small to reduce liability by taking such steps as:

- Incorporating and keeping the church's corporate status up to date. Doing so removes liability from individual church members.
- Adopting risk management strategies.
- Conducting background screenings on staff members.
- Carrying adequate insurance in a number of categories.
- Responding publicly when something bad happens.

Baptists in South Africa remain far apart after unity talks broke down between the predominantly white Baptist Union of Southern Africa and the mainly black Baptist Convention of South Africa. Denton Lotz, general secretary of the Baptist World Alliance (BWA), said, "It is our fervent prayer that... our Baptist brothers and sisters in South Africa will one day be able to celebrate in a public service that unity for which Christ prayed." BWA, which counts the Southern Baptist Convention among its membership, has promoted the unity talks since controversy erupted between the Union and the Convention at the BWA World Congress in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in August 1995. Baptists, like most South African denominations, have not been immune to apartheid, the now-defunct system used for decades to segregate the country by race. Desmond Hoffmeister, the Convention's general secretary, requested "the prayerful and moral support, understanding, and spiritual discernment of the international Baptist community to achieve... reconciliation among Baptists in South Africa."

10 years ago

John G. McCall, pastor of First Church, Vicksburg, for 30 years and a former president of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, is appointed to head Mississippi College's Department of Religion and Philosophy.

20 years ago

The SBC elects an all-Mississippi slate of officers: President James L. Sullivan, former Baptist Sunday School Board head; First Vice-President Dotson M. Nelson Jr., son of former MC

50 years ago

A post-war Father's Day editorial admonishes Baptist fathers, "Today you are training those who will either rule or ruin our world of tomorrow. Those who will lead us to gore or glory are your sons of today."

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Guy Henderson

The SBC in New Orleans

The 1996 Southern Baptist Convention meeting in New Orleans is now history. It may be looked upon in the future as one of the determining conventions of the last decade. The final approval was given to the restructuring plans for streamlining the convention. Will it make us lean and mean? Perhaps not — but definitely leaner. The savings are estimated to be in the millions.

Missions surfaced during the meeting and once again proved what Southern Baptists are about. The Lottie Moon Offering for Foreign Missions has reached almost \$90 million and missionaries will soon receive a small but well-deserved salary increase.

The Wednesday night appointment service was spectacular from the opening music to the final amen. There were 30 missionaries appointed in a moving service that

portrayed world need and missionaries reaching out to meet that need. We are still very much in the mission business.

Larry Lewis, Home Mission Board president, reported that now 4,857 missionaries are serving on domestic fields and 79,162 short-term volunteers were sent out last year.

The Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for Home Missions showed a 4% increase and is the highest on record, Lewis reported. He challenged Baptists to "start something new" and have 50,000 churches within the SBC by 2000.

The choir and orchestra of First Church, Jackson, performed well before an appreciative audience. The Boy's Choir from Zambia (Africa) sang well and closed out its performance with a stirring rendition of our United States national anthem.

Meanwhile, there were sermons and meetings and meetings and sermons. Seminaries gave their reports with most emphasizing how much they believed the Bible.

The Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) made a strong showing and has proven it is essential to a strong missions commitment.

Baptists let it be known that we continue our stance on abortion, homosexuality, and the value of the family. Jim Henry presided with fairness and is a real asset to the kingdom causes.

The election of Tom Elliff, Oklahoma City pastor, was without opposition and maybe — just maybe — it was not the paramount feature of the convention. Overall, the 1996 convention was one of the best in the last 15 years.

SBC resolutions speak strongly on numerous moral, social issues

By Dwayne Hastings

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — Meeting within blocks of the New Orleans French Quarter, messengers to the June 11-13 annual session of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) spoke out strongly on a variety of moral issues.

They adopted 14 resolutions condemning the Walt Disney Company's embrace of homosexuality, President Clinton's veto of partial-birth abortion ban legislation, and the arson of African-American churches. They also endorsed creation of a national commission to study the effects of gambling.

Expressing "deep disappointment" at the erosion of moral leadership within Walt Disney Company's leadership, Southern Baptists threatened to boycott Disney theme parks and stores unless the entertainment giant turns from its "anti-family, anti-Christian trend."

Messengers overwhelmingly passed the resolution which cited Disney's policy of providing benefits to the partners of its homosexual employees and production of "objectionable material" through its subsidiaries. The resolution encourages "the Southern Baptist family to support this resolution with (their) purchasing power, letters and influence."

Convention messengers were quick to support an amendment proposed by Wiley Drake, a pastor from Buena Park, Calif., which threatened a boycott of Disney theme parks and retail stores if the

company is unresponsive to the resolution.

In another resolution, SBC messengers indicated their opposition to the legalization of homosexual marriage, affirming "the Bible's teaching that promotion of homosexual conduct relationships is an abominable sin calling for God's swift judgment upon any such society."

Without opposition, messengers passed a resolution expressing profound disdain at the arson-blamed fires of African-American churches, promising to "pray for, support, encourage, stand with, and assist our sister churches and fellow believers in the African-American community who have been victims of these criminal acts."

In an outpouring of support for the victimized congregations, Southern Baptist messengers collected more than \$280,000 to aid in the rebuilding of the destroyed or damaged churches.

Messengers condemned President Bill Clinton's veto of the partial-birth abortion ban, calling his decision to veto the legislation "shameful."

The resolution expresses strong disapproval of the action of the President and congressmen who opposed the legislation, taking particular offense at Clinton's statement he prayed about the decision.

Clinton said Congress he would sign the bill if it included an exception in the case of "serious adverse

health consequences to the mother."

Mike Powell, pastor of Pachuta (Miss.) Church, who submitted one of several resolutions on the issue, said in reaction to Clinton's comments, "Someone needs to speak out for the babies."

On a related matter, messengers called on the Republican National Convention to maintain its pro-life platform plank and urged the Democratic National Convention to adopt such a plank.

Messengers spoke against physician-assisted suicide, affirming "biblical and Hippocratic prohibitions" against the practice.

Noting the resolution was consistent with the convention's long-standing affirmation of the sanctity of life, the statement read in part, "We vigorously denounce assisted suicide as an appropriate means of treating suffering."

A resolution protesting the worldwide persecution and denial of human rights of Christians was approved by messengers.

In adopting a resolution on Jewish evangelism, messengers urged the convention to make a planned and concerted effort to proclaim the gospel to the Jewish people.

Reacting to a feared tide of creeping ecumenism, members of the Resolutions Committee approved a resolution which criticized blurring of the historical distinctives of the Baptist faith.

Messengers approved a resolu-



THE FRAGMENTS

The green grass of home

"He that findeth a wife, findeth a good thing."

Believe me, I found a good one. On Dec. 21, 1998, we will have walked under the 50th Anniversary arch.

Someone suggested I should let her write one article or editorial or at least defend herself against some of the things I've said.

He was right, but instead of that suggestion, we took a poll and decided to write what she should say.

One wife to another: "Has your

husband lived up to his promises?"

"Oh, yes," she answered, "he said he wasn't good enough for me and he has certainly proved that."

My wife wouldn't say that at all. She might tell of the sign in a paint store: "Husbands choosing colors must have a note from their wives."

Max Lucado said about his wife: "She makes the grass look so green on this side of the fence, the other side looks barren."

I wish I had said that first. — GH

tion affirming Baptist autonomy and speaking against any long-term commitments with parachurch groups, saying Baptist entities should not become "an organic part of any other body."

In other action, a resolution in support of a National Commission on Gambling, the focus of legislation recently passed by the U.S. House of Representatives, was endorsed by messengers. The commission will study the effects of gambling on society.

Committee members cited recent studies revealing at least 65% of adults have gambled and that legal gaming revenues have climbed from \$17 billion in 1976 to over \$500 billion last year.

Other resolutions accepted by the messengers:

— Affirmed parents' rights to

direct the education of their children, encouraging legislators "to develop the means and methods of returning educational and funding choices to parents."

— Urged Southern Baptists to multiply their efforts to provide for global and domestic hunger and relief needs. The resolution noted giving to hunger and relief ministries is experiencing steep decline.

— Called for Southern Baptists to join in a 40-day season of prayer beginning Sept. 27 for "the future of our country." The resolution also notes election day, Nov. 5, as a National Day of Prayer.

— Expressed appreciation for the "kind hospitality of the people of New Orleans."

Hastings is Christian Life Commission PR director.

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Henderson announces retirement as Baptist Record editor

W. Guy Henderson announced June 18 that he will retire from the position of editor of **The Baptist Record** effective June 30, after nearly six years at the helm of the fourth largest state

newsjournal in the Southern Baptist Convention.

Henderson, 68, and wife Lois served 20 years as foreign missionaries in South Korea and the Philippines (1959-78), where he

was pastor of the International Baptist Church in Manila.

He served as chairman of the Korea Baptist Mission for six years and on the executive committee of the Philippine Mission for four years.

After retiring from the foreign mission field, the Smith County native joined the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB) as a consultant in the Stewardship Department (1978-81) and then served as director of the MBCB Evangelism Department (1981-90) before assuming the editorship in late 1990.

Henderson also pastored Society Hill Church, Oak Vale (1952-54), and Emmanuel Church,

Biloxi (1954-58), prior to his foreign mission service.

Henderson served two years in the U.S. Navy (1946-48), and as a U.S. Army Reserve chaplain (1958-80).

He is the recipient of the Freedom Foundation's Medal of Honor for patriotic writing, and the author of **Passport to Missions**, published by Broadman in 1978, and **The Pastor's Manual**, published by Baptist Press, Manila, in 1979.

The Hendersons have four adult children and eight grandchildren. They are members of Morrison Heights Church, Clinton.

Their address is 202 McDonald Drive, Clinton, MS 39056.



Henderson

Okla. pastor Tom Elliff elected SBC president without opposition

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — Southern Baptist Convention messengers elected Oklahoma pastor and former missionary Tom Elliff as president of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) June 11.

He succeeds Jim Henry, pastor of First Church, Orlando, Fla., as president of the nearly 16-million-member denomination.

Elliff was unopposed for the SBC presidency, the first time in more than 50 years that a non-incumbent president did not face opposition.

In other elections:

— Bob Anderson, pastor of

Parkview Church, Baton Rouge, La., was elected first vice president by a 3,423-2,884 margin — 54.27% to 45.73% — over Fred Powell, president of Communicators Ministries of Richmond, Mo.

Anderson has served in numerous denominational roles and is a trustee of Southwestern Seminary, Fort Worth.

— African-American pastor Fred Luder of New Orleans was elected second vice president of the SBC June 11 in a runoff election with another Louisiana pastor.

Luder, pastor of Franklin Avenue Church, New Orleans, received 2,417 votes (72.28%) to 936 votes (27.92%) for Leon Hyatt, a retired pastor from Pineville, La., and former chairman of the Foreign Mission Board trustees. Four pastors were on the first ballot.

— Lee Porter, of Lawrenceville, Ga., was unopposed for a 20th term as registration secretary. A former pastor and retired Baptist Sunday School Board employee, the New Orleans convention marked the 50th consecutive SBC meeting he has attended.

— David Atchison of Franklin, Tenn., recording secretary since 1991, also was elected for another term.

Elliff, 52, a third-generation Southern Baptist pastor from Paris, Texas, currently serves First Southern Church, Del City, Okla. From 1981-83 he was a Southern Baptist foreign missionary in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe. He also has held pastorates in Arkansas, Texas, and Colorado. He is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia, Ark., and Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth.

Elliff and his wife Jeannie will celebrate their 30th anniversary this year. They have four children, ranging in age from 19 to 26.



Tom Elliff (left) and his wife of 30 years, Jeannie, celebrate his June 11 election without opposition to serve a first term as president of the 16-million member Southern Baptist Convention (SBC). The election of Elliff, pastor of First Southern Baptist Church of Del City, Okla., marks the first time in 50 years that a non-incumbent SBC presidential candidate has not faced opposition. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

The Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Thursday, June 20, 1996

Published Since 1877

Personnel moves OK'd...

Exec. Committee names Perkins, Pinson to posts

The executive committee of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB), meeting June 18 at the Baptist Building in Jackson, named William H. "Dusty" Perkins Jr. of Ridgeland as editor of **The Baptist Record** and selected Paul A. Pinson of Madison as manager of the MBCB Accounting Department.

Perkins, 40, will replace W. Guy Henderson, who recently announced his retirement from the position he has held for almost six years (see related article on this page).

Perkins has served for four years as associate editor of the Mississippi Baptist newsjournal — the fourth largest in circulation in the Southern Baptist Convention.

He initiated several popular features, including the Bible-based "Bibliocipher" word puzzle by Charles A. Marx of Hattiesburg and the "LifeAnswers" counseling column by Ron Mumbower, minister of counseling at First Church, Jackson.

In addition, a number of his news articles and features on the work of Mississippi Baptists have received wide exposure through Baptist Press, the Southern Baptist worldwide news service.

Perkins was a general assignments reporter/photographer (1978-79) at **The Daily Sentinel-Star** newspaper in Grenada, where he and the editorial staff won several awards from the Mississippi Press Association.

He also worked as a press aide and photographer (1979-84) for Mississippi Governor William F. Winter, and served as public information officer (1984-92) for the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency.

Pinson, a certified public accountant, will replace Barri A. Shirley, who was promoted by the executive committee on March 7 to the position of MBCB administrative assistant for business.

Pinson has 16 years of accounting experience with two Jackson-based accounting firms: Eubank and Betts (1980-89 and

1991-96) and Davenport, Holliday, and Jones (1989-91).

He has extensive knowledge in the area of non-profit organizations.

Perkins, a Belzoni native, and his wife Karen have been married for 11 years. They have a four-year-old daughter and a two-year-old son.

They are longtime members of First Church, Jackson.

Pinson, a Jackson native, and his wife Pat have been married for 10 years. They have a five-year-old daughter and a two-year-old son.

They are members of Ridgecrest Church, Madison.



Pinson



Perkins

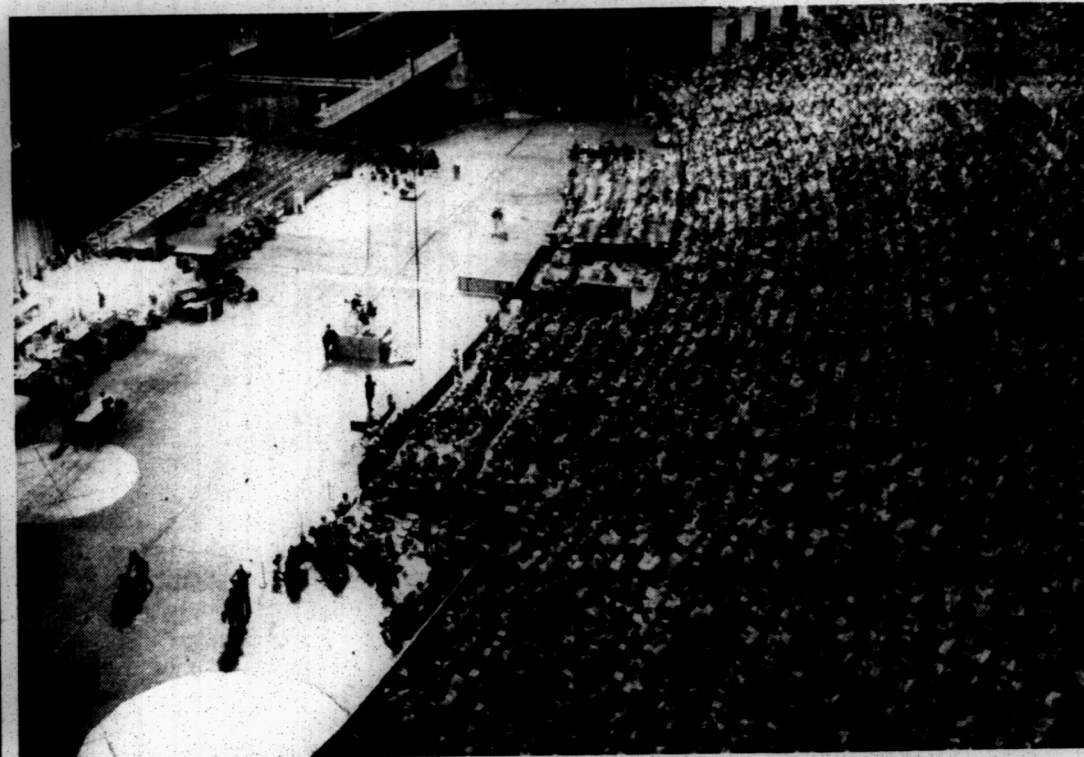
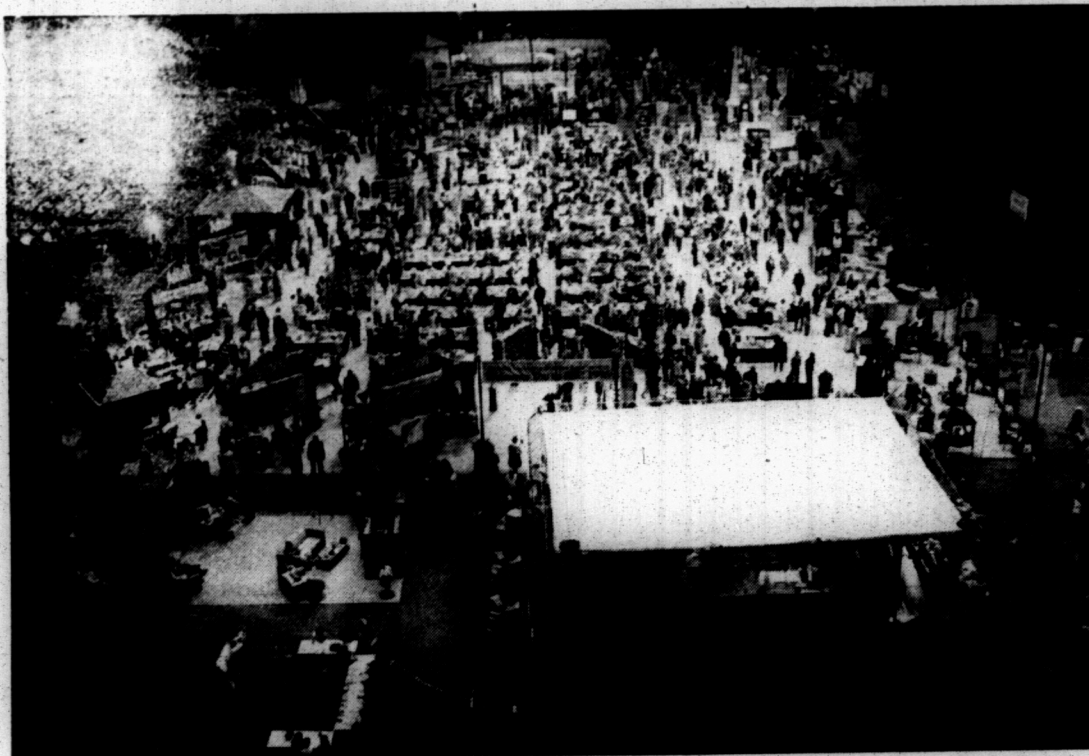
BR observes special deadlines for July 4

There will be no Baptist Record published on Thursday, July 4. Publication will resume on July 11.

Any news items needing to be published prior to July 4 will appear in the June 27 issue. Those items should be in The Baptist Record office no later than noon on Friday, June 21.

News items to appear in the July 11 issue should arrive in The Baptist Record office no later than noon on Wednesday, July 3.

Because of the newspaper's agreement with the United States Postal Service, The Baptist Record publishes only 50 issues a year, taking hiatus the weeks of July 4 and Christmas.



A total of 13,697 messengers registered for the Southern Baptist Convention's 1996 annual meeting at the Superdome in New Orleans — the lowest total since 13,529 messengers attended the 1981 meeting in Los Angeles. The

highest total of messengers ever recorded occurred in Dallas in 1985, when 45,519 were registered. While the Convention conducted business on a portion of the cavernous Superdome's floor (right photo), the exhibition hall was set up just

behind the rear stage curtain (left photo) on the remainder of the floor. Many messengers and exhibitors were pleased with the convenient, side-by-side manner in which the two floor areas were organized. (Photos by William H. Perkins Jr.)

SBC messengers challenge Disney & church arsons; move ahead with 21st-century thrust

NEW ORLEANS — Here-and-now issues — abandonment of traditional values by the Walt Disney Company and arson of African-American churches — stirred messengers to action during the 1996 Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in New Orleans.

With the 21st century just ahead, a restructuring of the nation's largest Protestant denomination, to sharpen its service to churches in fulfilling the Great Commission, gained final approval.

It was an intimate kind of SBC annual meeting; just 13,697 messengers met for business sessions, preaching, music, and prayer in a partitioned third of the Louisiana Superdome June 11-13 in New Orleans. In harmonious family fashion, they elected Oklahoma pastor Tom Elliff as president, the sole nominee.

Elliff, however, was far from complacent, calling Southern Baptists to "Step up to the plate and be the people of God he expects us to be" in his first public statements.

On Disney, for example, Elliff stated: "Over the years... the children would say, 'Can we go to the movies? It's a Disney movie.' You say, 'Well, if it's a Disney movie, Okay.' But you can't say that anymore. That's unfortunate for us. It's even more unfortunate for Disney because it means they have taken a direction that we can't support financially, we can't support morally. I believe that's the sentiment of our convention."

Elliff, however, was mild compared to the resolution challenging the arson fires at more than 30 African-American churches, most in the Southeast, in the past 18 months.

"The desecration and destruc-

tion of churches is a particularly heinous form of hatred," messengers stated. "Attacks against any church constitute an attack against the entire believing community."

At the initiation of outgoing SBC President Jim Henry, an offering was taken during the convention's Wednesday evening session for helping rebuild the churches. Messengers gave \$38,628 in cash and \$57,690 in pledges; even before the offering, \$185,000 had been raised in pledges by state Baptist conventions and churches. The overall total: \$281,318, with further donations to be channeled to the rebuilding effort via the SBC Executive Committee.

Henry, in his presidential address, urged pastors, church and state convention leaders to "go home and take collections and free up resources to assist in rebuilding."

In an earlier news conference, Henry said he hoped the offering will help show

"that we've come a long way since some earlier days when these kind of things happened and there was no response from our convention and evangelicals."

More than 17,000 Southern Baptist volunteer construction workers are prepared to assist in rebuilding churches in

Henry added. Members of the Brotherhood

Commission's construction fellowship — state conventions groups with such names as Baptist Builders and Builders for Christ — will offer their services "with sensitivity," said James Williams, the commission's president. Some black churches have said they want to rebuild on their own, Williams said, but some will need help.

At the 1995 meeting in Atlanta, messengers approved the "Covenant for a New Century" restructuring, aiming for a sharpened Great Commission focus in part by reducing the number of SBC agencies from 19 to 12 and creating a new North American Mission Board (NAMB) to replace the Home Mission Board, Brotherhood Commission, and Radio and Television Commission.

Messengers to this year's annual meeting approved for the second year a change in Bylaw 15 which lists the SBC agencies, the only part of the restructuring which needed approval at two

successive SBC meetings.

Ronnie Floyd, pastor of First Church, Springdale, Ark., and chairman of the SBC Executive Committee, told messengers after the vote, "Never before has a denomination of this magnitude ever restructured all of its entities... all for the purpose of taking the gospel of Jesus Christ to the world."

Messengers were given an eight-page "Transition Plan for Covenant for a New Century" from the 10-member Implementation Task Force appointed in September 1995 by the Executive Committee to implement changes envisioned in the Covenant by the end of the SBC, meeting in Dallas in 1997.

The bottom line of the report, said ITF chairman Bob Reccord, is a savings of approximately \$34-\$41 million over five years. Monies saved will "be made available for the front lines of missions church planting, and evangelism," said Reccord, pastor of First Church, Norfolk, Va.

The report lists in detail how each affected agency will deal with the restructuring. In addition to the three agencies merged into the NAMB, several agencies will be dissolved, with the Historical Commission's archives to be operated by the Council of Seminary Presidents; the Stewardship

Commission's Cooperative Program promotion responsibility to be handled by the Executive Committee; and the Southern Baptist Foundation to become a subsidiary corporation of the Executive Committee. Other agencies being dissolved are the Education Commission and the Southern Baptist Commission on The American Baptist Theological Seminary.

In addition, the Foreign Mission Board will become the International Mission Board and the Christian Life Commission will become the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission. The SBC Annuity Board does not change under the restructuring.

Among points made in response to media questions during a news conference:

— The number of jobs to be eliminated in the restructuring has not yet been determined. The total number of personnel in the seven affected agencies was 566 as of mid-1995. The ITF report said the vast majority will continue in their current jobs after the implementation, but "because of the provisions (of restructuring) some employees will be severed or relocated to a new entity." Reccord said the affected agencies are taking "great care" to fairly compensate those who face job loss through severance benefits, early retirement options, outplacement, and other measures.

— No decision has been made about facilities of the Radio and Television Commission in Fort Worth, when the agency becomes a part of the NAMB. Administrative personnel likely will be located in Alpharetta, Ga., home of NAMB. Answers related to operations functions are more likely in 90 to 120 days.

Mississippi messengers rank second at '96 SBC

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — Mississippians made up the second-largest number of registered messengers at the 1996 annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) in New Orleans.

As of 9 p.m. Wednesday, June 12, figures tabulated by SBC Registration Secretary Lee Porter showed a total of 13,697 messengers had registered. That total included 1,250 messengers from Mississippi. Only Georgia registered a higher number — 1,300.

Other states with high attendance figures included Louisiana and North Carolina, which each registered 1,200 messengers. Alabama was next with 1,050, followed by Tennessee with 1,000.

On the low end, no messengers registered from Rhode Island, Delaware, or Vermont. New Hampshire had one messenger and two each registered from Maine and North Dakota.

Among churches, nine from Mississippi sent their full contingent of 10 messengers. Eight Louisiana churches sent 10 messengers each.

Messengers approve bylaw to implement restructure plan

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — Southern Baptists made it official June 11 — the denomination as it has been known for decades is being reshaped for the 21st century.

The restructuring of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC), which reduces the number of SBC agencies from 19 to 12, is part of the "Covenant for a New Century" approved at the SBC's 150th anniversary meeting in Atlanta in 1995.

Messengers to this year's annual meeting, June 11-13 at the Louisiana Superdome in New Orleans, approved for the second year a change in Bylaw 15 which lists the SBC agencies. The bylaw change was the only part of the restructuring plan which needed approval at two successive SBC meetings.

The adoption of Bylaw 15 "provides a new moment for the Southern Baptist Convention," said Ronnie Floyd, pastor of First Church, Springdale, Ark., and chairman of the SBC Executive Committee.

"Do you realize you have just changed possibly the course of denominationalism in all of America?" he asked. "Never before has a denomination of this magnitude ever restructured all of its entities...."

Messengers were given an

eight-page "Transition Plan for Covenant for a New Century," a report from the 10-member Implementation Task Force (ITF), as they entered the Superdome for the opening session of the convention. A motion failed to delay the vote on the restructuring recommendations until the afternoon session to give messengers time to look over the report.

The ITF was appointed in September 1995 by the SBC Executive Committee to implement the changes required by the Covenant for a New Century. The task force was assigned "to analyze, study, and take actions necessary, including monitoring the transitional actions of all SBC entities, to facilitate the orderly and timely transitions approved by the SBC in adopting the Covenant for a New Century."

The ITF report given to messengers is the first detailed look at the transition of the SBC restructuring which, organizationally, will be in place at the end of the SBC meeting in Dallas in 1997. The report includes cost/benefits associated with the mergers and dissolutions of the seven agencies and addresses personnel issues.

The bottom line of the report, said ITF Chairman Bob Reccord, is a savings of approximately \$34-\$41 million over five years.

Monies saved will "be made

available for the front lines of missions church planting and evangelism," said Reccord, pastor of First Church, Norfolk, Va.

A major part of the report deals with the creation of a new agency, the North American Mission Board, from the merger of three agencies: the Home Mission Board, Brotherhood Commission, and Radio and Television Commission.

The report says the one-time costs of severance, relocation of personnel, and non-real estate implementation costs are between \$4.1 million and \$5.7 million. The recurring savings from labor efficiencies (derived primarily by eliminating redundancies and duplications) are estimated at \$6 million per year for five years. Another \$3 million in recurring savings will come from non-labor efficiencies, the report says.

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Restructure plan on go

Robert Reccord (center), pastor of First Church, Norfolk, Va., and chairman of the Implementation Task Force (ITF) charged with carrying out the massive restructuring of the Southern Baptist Convention, explains the work of the task force after messengers to the 1996 Southern Baptist Convention approved the restructuring for the second and final time. Accompanying Reccord were ITF members Bill Hogue (left), retired executive director of the California Southern Baptist Convention, and Ted Warren, executive vice-president of the Baptist Sunday School Board. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

Pre-SBC Crossover evangelism thrust yields 2,659 new believers

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — The city known for jazz, cajun cooking, and sensual nightlife received an invitation to eternal life when Southern Baptists gathered for their annual meeting. At least 2,659 people accepted the offer, and one church was started as a result.

During the pre-Southern Baptist Convention evangelism thrust known as Crossover New Orleans, volunteers gave away food and New Testaments, conducted neighborhood surveys, witnessed on the streets of the French Quarter, and shared the gospel in four prisons. In addition, volunteer teams witnessed in low-income housing communities throughout the week.

The number of professions of faith is a record for convention-related evangelistic activities, said Keith Walker of the Home Mission Board (HMB) evangelism staff. He attributed the numbers to a greater prayer effort underscoring the witnessing this year.

Fred Dyess, director of missions for the Baptist Association of New Orleans, said, "It was a blessing to see people witnessing all over the place. I know our churches will follow up on people who made decisions and take what they learned and do it again. We're trying to take the gospel to every household by the year 2000, and this was a good start."

"This will have a real impact on the city," Wayne Jenkins, director of evangelism for the Louisiana Convention, said. Crossover participants saturated the area with gospel presentations and strengthened local churches.

Six weeks before Crossover, members of Memorial Church, Metairie, La., began ministering in the St. Bernard Housing Community, home to 6,000 residents. With help from other churches and volunteers, a Crossover block party there served as a kickoff event for

a new church that met for the first time June 9 on the St. Bernard property.

Don Whatley, Memorial's minister of missions, summarized the strategy: "Minister, win 'em to Christ and disciple 'em." Immediate needs include beds, air conditioners, and fans, he said. Future plans call for medical ministry and parenting helps.

At the block party, 800 hot dogs were served, in addition to red beans and rice. About 230 people

made professions of faith in Jesus Christ, Whatley said. More than 100 professions of faith were recorded at the Sunday church service.

Residents are "hungry to know that somebody loves them and cares for them," observed Ed Pope, North Dakota Baptist Convention evangelism director, one of dozens of volunteers who witnessed, passed out Bibles, and conducted activities for children during the block party.



LifeAnswers

Ron Mumbower, Ph.D.
Minister of Counseling
First Church, Jackson

I am a recovering drug-user, alcoholic, and adulterer. I've turned my life around with the help of the Lord. How can I reclaim my family?

Take it one day at a time, and give yourself plenty of time. It took a long time for you to get to this point, and it will take some time for your family to come around. Dysfunctional families usually have three rules: Don't talk, don't feel, and don't trust. If you understand that your family operates under those three rules, you will have a better chance of reclaiming them. Select one of the rules each day and search for ways to overcome it. For example, on the day you tackle the "don't talk" rule, give all your attention to your family and just listen to what they have to say. Don't be defensive and don't try to fix the broken things they mention. This is a difficult discipline, but it will work wonders in bringing about forgiveness and renewing relationships. May your lot increase as you seek to overcome the sin in your life and

break this cycle of destruction.

A dark secret I have kept from my husband is about to be exposed, and it will hurt him deeply. How can I minister to him?

He will be going through a time of grief because of the loss of a dream or ideal that was very dear to him. He will need to work through the hurts and emotions he will encounter, so grant him the time to do that. Once he finds out, don't become defensive. Allow him to talk, ponder, cry, explode — without physical violence, of course. Make sure his Christian friends surround him with support and encouragement. Alert your pastor, church counselor, and other appropriate church staff members of what is coming so they can minister to him. See that he stays active in his outlets, such as hobbies, clubs, exercise, etc. Give him a copy of **Good Grief**, a book by Granger Westburg that deals with loss and the accompanying anguish. Most of all, pray for him without ceasing.

Evangelists' Profile

This space is dedicated to Mississippi men and women who have committed themselves to vocational evangelism. Churches are encouraged to take advantage of their talents in helping to reap the harvest.

This week's evangelist

Gary M. Bowlin
Brandon

Years in Ministry: 23, 16 in full-time evangelism
Education: Louisiana State University, New Orleans Seminary

Places of service: Korea, Hong Kong, Romania, France, Austria, Israel

Focal ministry: Revival and crusade preaching

Personal: Married for 31 years to Norman Benton Bowlin; Daughter Julie teaches in Gulfport; Son Brad completing college; Worked as a CPA prior to ministry; Past president, Conference of Mississippi Baptist Evangelists

Quote: "We have seen over 2,000 people come to know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior in the last 16 months. This is a great blessing to the church and the community. We are excited about the future and the harvest that is ahead of us."

Send your counseling questions to LifeAnswers c/o The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Please be brief. Name is not required. Remember: in time of crisis, your pastor can make recommendations on your counseling needs.

capsules

Letters to the editor



JEWES FOR JESUS HAND OUT 1.3 MILLION TRACTS: MOSCOW, Russia — In three weeks of outreach, 18 Jews for Jesus from Russia, Ukraine, Belorussia, and Lithuania distributed over 1.3 million Jewish gospel broadside tracts and gathered the names and addresses of more than 5,000 people who wanted more information about Y'shua (Jesus). Of that number, more than 1,200 are Jewish. Over 100 Jewish people and over 300 non-Jews made public professions of faith in Jesus. This fourth annual Jews for Jesus summer witnessing campaign, from May 25-June 15, was led by Avi Snyder, director of Jews for Jesus in Russia and Ukraine. Snyder explained that the time for this year's campaign was chosen very carefully: "We started on Pentecost weekend and carried the campaign through to the eve of the Russian presidential elections, June 15. We didn't know what kind of... opportunities might exist after the elections, so we wanted to seize the moment...."

EXPERIENCING GOD NIV BIBLE SET FOR RELEASE: NASHVILLE (BP) — The most popular study Bible published by the Baptist Sunday School Board's Broadman & Holman Publishers will soon be available in the contemporary translation most popular with Christian readers. The New International Version (NIV) of the "The Experiencing God Study Bible" was set to be released June 1. The current New King James Version (NKJV) of the study Bible has sold approximately 115,000 copies since the fall of 1994, with a third printing under way. This information alone provides a favorable outlook for the NIV version, Overstreet said, since it outsells the NKJV in the general Bible market by more than 2-1.

COURT STRIKES DOWN GAY-RIGHTS RESTRICTION: WASHINGTON (ABP) — Colorado cannot ban laws that protect homosexuals from discrimination, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled May 20. In a 6-3 decision written by Justice Anthony Kennedy, the high court said the state constitutional amendment approved by Colorado voters in 1992 violates the federal Constitution's guarantee of equal protection under the law. "A state cannot deem a class of persons a stranger to its laws," Kennedy wrote for the majority. He was joined by Justices John Paul Stevens, Sandra Day O'Connor, David Souter, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, and Stephen Breyer. In a spirited dissent joined by Chief Justice William Rehnquist, and Justice Clarence Thomas, Justice Antonin Scalia said the court majority's invalidation of the Colorado amendment is "an act, not of judicial judgment, but of political will."

SBC SEMINARY PROGRAM EXTENDED FOR 5 YEARS: NASHVILLE (BP) — Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) seminary presidents have decided to continue the Seminary Extension program for five years while "conducting a thorough review" of the program. The Council of Seminary Presidents also expects to name a director for Seminary Extension, now housed in the SBC building in Nashville. Currently, retired director Doran C. McCarty is serving as interim head of the program while a search for his successor is begun. R. Albert Mohler, president of Southern Seminary, Louisville, Ky., and a spokesman for the six seminary presidents, said the extension of the program "is intended to assure Southern Baptists that the current program of Seminary Extension will continue for the next five years and that any changes in the program thereafter will come as a result of strategic planning...."

BHUTAN FOR CHRIST: On April 21 more than 500 people from Udalguri in North East India went to the India/Bhutan border and, led by Edwin Lopez, BWA regional secretary for Asia and the general secretary of the Asian Baptist Federation, they prayed to God to open the doors of Bhutan to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Bhutan, a land-locked country with India on one side and China on the other, has a population of more than 800,000 people. It is ruled by a constitutional monarch, King Jigme Singye Wangchuck. Predominantly a Buddhist country the preaching of the Gospel is prohibited there. After the prayer meeting ended, more than 10,000 people gathered in Udalguri that afternoon and listened to Lopez preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ. "God is good all the time. All the time, God is good," said Lopez, who asks Baptists around the world to pray for Bhutan, the land of the "thunder dragon," so that the forces of darkness may be destroyed and the light of the gospel of Jesus Christ will rule in Bhutan.

MURRAY O'HAIR MISSING, NEWSPAPER REPORTS: AUSTIN, Texas (ABP) — America's leading atheist, Madalyn Murray O'Hair, has vanished. The New York Times reported April 21 that O'Hair and two relatives associated with American Atheists Inc. have not been seen nor heard from since Sept. 28, 1995. Nevertheless, the organization's office in Austin, Texas, continues to operate and send out literature, the Times reported. Missing are O'Hair; one of her sons, Jon Garth Murray; and her granddaughter, Robin Murray-O'Hair. "Until 4:35 p.m. on Sept. 28, I knew precisely where they were," the Times quoted office manager Orin Tyson as saying. The Times article reported: "There is no evidence of foul play; no missing-persons report has been filed; the lawn of the west Austin home the three missing people shared is neatly cut; and, on March 27, someone with a savings account at a NatWest Bank in Broomington, N.J., bought a cashier's check to pay \$5,500 in overdue property taxes on the home."

Racism alive, well

Editor:

How disappointed I was to hear about the cancellation of a church-sponsored event at Beulah Church in Magee when youth members brought a black guest with them. To add insult to injury, the pastor defended the closed-door policy of the all-white congregation by declaring that the policy is legal under the First Amendment, which protects freedom of religion. The First Amendment and Bill of Rights contain some of the greatest rights given to persons under a free democracy. With each right comes a responsibility.

The Southern Baptist Convention made the responsible decision last year to break with racism and apologize for past discriminations. Now is the time to put such words into action and take a stand against pastors and congregations which don't support our policy of non-discrimination. Such hatred and racism has no room in our churches and undermines our message of God's love to all people.

"Red and yellow, black and white, they are precious in his sight..." — this message should not be silenced. Our Mississippi church leaders must stand up and expel churches who advocate such non-Baptist and thoroughly non-Christian doctrines.

Dorsey Carson Jr.
Jackson

Bias is no secret

Editor:

Throughout the years I've been reading The Baptist Record editorials and articles, I've known from the start just how biased you are in your comments aimed at the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC).

It is crystal clear that you are biased toward the left-winged liberals of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship (CBF). It's as if you are ashamed to be a Southern Baptist! We Mississippi Southern Baptists pay you a good salary to write good things about the SBC and the Mississippi Baptist Convention (MBC), not the CBF!

It is also no secret about your biased opinion against the policies regarding the nomination and election of SBC officials, specifically that of the office of president. It

appears from your May 30, 1996, editorial (page 2, paragraphs 5 and 6) that you believe there is some sort of secret scandal involving those 75 folks behind closed doors in Atlanta that ultimately has already decided the outcome of this year's election! Really?!

Mr. Editor, give us something worth reading in your editorials, otherwise, quit wasting ink on just "hearsay"!

David Crowe, pastor
Siloam Church
Meadville

Editor's Note: I've been an unashamed Southern Baptist for over 50 years. I am ashamed of some of the un-Southern Baptist things being done by present-day SBC leadership.

Sick of the rivalry

Editor:

In recent years I have become increasingly concerned about the direction our beloved SBC has taken. It seems as if there has risen in the ranks of our denomination a group of men who have taken it upon themselves to usurp God's position as the true leader of our denomination. No longer does it seem that each individual Baptist has a part in seeking God's direction and voicing their convictions about the direction the denomination should take. It seems as if this responsibility has been taken over by a group of 80 who meet together secretly, long before our convention convenes, and take secret nominations and secret votes to determine who will be the next leader of the SBC.

I for one resent the implication

that these men have made which, in essence, says that I do not have the sense, the education, nor the spiritual insight to be a part of the selection process. When I last read the Scripture, it still heralded the idea of the priesthood of the believer. It did not in any way imply that the many should seek to be guided by the few who think of themselves as more spiritual, more knowledgeable, and more able to discern God's will. It still taught that each of us as individuals have the right and the responsibility to come before God's throne of grace, earnestly seeking his will and his direction in all matters. The last time I checked, God's throne of grace was not in a hotel room in Atlanta, Ga.

To be quite honest, I'm sick to death with the rivalry that has grown to exist within our denomination. I'm sick of moderates, I'm sick of liberals, and I'm sick of conservatives. I for one am looking for just a few plain old Christians to fellowship with, to worship with, and to work with in sharing the good news of the Lord Jesus Christ. If there are any of those out there, maybe we should get together and hold our own convention, one which looks to God for direction and not to the "Council of 80."

Eddie H. Bates, pastor
Shiloh Church
Lawrence Association

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Nationwide Totals:
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House of Hope donations: \$108,996
Given locally: \$17,461



Woman's Missionary Union

Mission Statement:
To provide missions-related programs, information, resources, and training to motivate and enable churches and believers to meet spiritual, physical, and social needs, locally and globally.

Thursday, June 20, 1996

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 7

Reaching the lost is critical, Rankin and Lewis tell WMU

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — The need to reach the world for Christ is becoming more critical than ever, the presidents of Southern Baptists' two missionary-sending agencies told participants in the 1996 Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) annual meeting June 9.

Home Mission Board (HMB) President Larry Lewis emphasized the urgency to reach the United States for Christ by the year 2000. He cited at least five instances in the Bible which he said show that Jesus directed his followers to reach everyone in the world with the gospel.

"If we're to be about anything as a people of God, it's to be shar-

ing the gospel," Lewis said. "People without Jesus are damned, doomed, and condemned. Until we believe that, we're not going to get very excited about missions."

More than 200 active and retired foreign missionaries introduced themselves during a separate session highlighting foreign missions.

Foreign Mission Board (FMB) President Jerry Rankin said he could not recall having seen "such a large assemblage of our missionaries. It made me wonder who is minding the store," he joked. "But this is less than 4% of the active and emeritus Southern Baptist missionaries."

"The harvest on traditional (mission) fields is multiplying with more than 800 baptisms every day and more than 50 churches started each year," he said. "But I believe we are in danger of neglecting the harvest. We need to quit commending ourselves and realize God is doing something new. We need to recognize the terrible darkness of the night for those without Jesus Christ."

Rankin said FMB personnel have identified 2,466 people groups that have not been accessible to missionaries. And while foreign missionaries reached 41 new people groups last year, he said, the systematic effort to reach such groups cannot be accomplished quickly enough.

"Millions will die before we can reach them with the gospel," Rankin said.

During a session emphasizing reaching persons "in the homeland," Lewis praised Southern Baptist leaders who 20 years ago "dared to dream." Their dreams resulted in Bold Mission Thrust, Southern Baptists' plan to share Christ with everyone in the world by the year 2000.

"Those who dreamed that dream were not just having hallucinations. Almost 2000 years ago Jesus had the same strategy," Lewis said.

He told WMU members of the HMB's "Celebrate Jesus: 2000" interdenominational strategy to get the gospel message to everyone in America by the year 2000. The HMB plan, according to Lewis, calls for an extensive prayer effort in 1997, followed by taking Christ to every home in 1998 and ending with crusades throughout 1999.

"I believe Southern Baptists are on the threshold of a fourth Great Awakening," Lewis said.

"Let's stand with God and make it so," he challenged.

In a tribute to the contribution of WMU to missions endeavors, Rankin called WMU "the missionary conscience of Southern Baptists, challenging us to financial support for those who go."

State sons earn SEBTS degrees

Southeastern Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C., granted degrees to two students with Mississippi ties during commencement ceremonies held May 18.

John Mitchell Hosey of Laurel received the master of divinity degree.

Devin P. Hudson of Amory received the master of divinity with languages degree. Hudson was also awarded the Nannie Bruce Nelson New Testament Award, given each year to the graduating senior who shows excellence in New Testament studies.

Cascilla to note 125th anniversary

Cascilla Church, North Central Association, will celebrate its 125th anniversary on June 23.

Sunday School will begin at 9:45 a.m.; morning worship will begin at 11 a.m. Larry Booth will be the guest speaker.

A covered dish dinner on the grounds will be served at noon.

David Sapp is pastor.

For more information, call the church at (601) 647-2800.



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Just for the Record



William Carey College's Department of Theater and Communication recently honored students for excellence during the 1995-96 academic year. They were (from left): standing, Justin Bunton of Loranger, La., Most Valuable Member of Serampore Players and the R.E. Cromis I Memorial scholarship; James Mitchell of Hattiesburg, Doris Schneider scholarship; Shannon Clark of Tupelo, Joyce Quave Roberts Memorial scholarship; seated, Ashley Robinson of Moselle, Mark Wilkinson Memorial scholarship; Cliff Burris of McComb, Joe DeKalb Roberts Memorial scholarship; Tobi Kinder of Missouri City, Texas, Acting Achievement Award; Ryan Gill of Ozark, Ala., Achievement in Technical Theatre Award and Acting Achievement Award; Jae Sims of Columbus, Acting Achievement Award; and Jamie Jackson of Jackson, Acting Achievement Award.



Lexie Church, Walthall Association, recently held a groundbreaking ceremony for its new education space and fellowship area. The church will complete the project debt-free. Building committee members who participated were (left to right): Rob Robbins, pastor; Lamar Adams; Leroy Barron, builder; Genevieve Kennedy; Victor Holmes, chairman; Christel Van Dan; and Jerry Conerly. Committee members not pictured are Betty Dillon and Hubert McDaniel.

An alert regarding "scam" activities has been sent out by Nicky Cruz. Some unknown person, saying he is related to Nicky Cruz attempts to get money from churches. Various reasons are given on how he plans to use the funds.

A concerned group of laymen and pastors met June 4 in Jackson.

Staying in the Word?

Henry Bennett Sr., pastor of Terry Road Church, Jackson, is conducting a personal survey of persons who have read the Bible through more than once.

Bennett said he wants to "encourage people to read the Bible."

If you have read the Bible multiple times and would like to participate in Bennett's survey, call him by June 29 at (601) 371-0094.

in the lack of laymen involved in Convention matters. The group by consensus, agreed to encourage lay leaders to be as active in Convention matters as they are in mission activities.

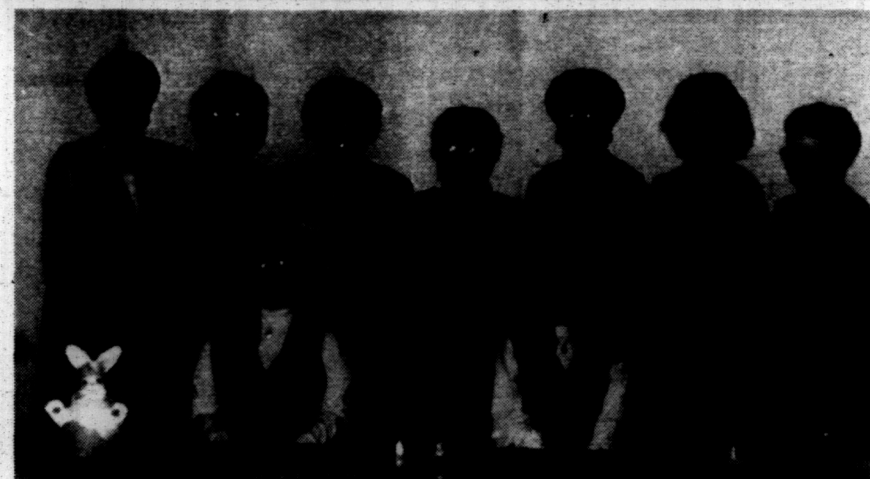
NASHVILLE (BP) — The Baptist Sunday School Board's Bible teaching-reaching division will combine its two biblical studies departments into one Oct. 1. According to division director Bill Taylor, the preschool-children and youth-adult departments will become the biblical studies department. Louis Hanks, currently director of the youth-adult department, will lead the new department. Cos Davis, director of the preschool-children's department, previously announced his resignation effective May 31.

Friendship Church, Brookhaven, will hold dedication services at 11 a.m. on June 30 for the new educational building and fellowship hall. The guest speaker will be Raymond Parker. Lunch will be served at noon. Afternoon services will start at 1:30. Wiley Reid is pastor.

ALPHARETTA, Ga. (BP) — Customers needing Home Mission Board materials in July and August are asked to place their orders by June 28 to avoid shipping delays caused by the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta. The Olympics are scheduled for July 19 to Aug. 4. Area postal carriers have told the HMB Marketing Department to expect disrupted service during that time. To order HMB products, call 1-800-634-2462 or fax 1-800-253-2823.

Eastside, First, and McLaurin Heights churches in Pearl will sponsor "Summer Worship in the Park" on June 23 from 2-7 p.m. Activities will be provided for all ages. For more information call Penny Turbeville at 981-2000.

The Disciple Quartet will be in concert at Arrowood Church, Meridian, June 30, 6 p.m. Chris Atkinson is pastor.



Center Ridge Church, Clarke County, recently held a "WMU Day." GAS cooked breakfast for their Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) leaders, and presented a short missions program after the meal. Those who participated were (from left, seated) Margaret Fleming, Miranda Davidson, Kristen Dearman, Lydia Fleming, Rachel Lambert, (standing, from left) Lisa Dearman, Sarah Harvey, Jewel Livingston, Kathleen Sagrillo, Anna Manning, Eloyce Mosley, and Nat Harris.



The board of directors of the Home Mission Board recently took an awareness tour to Alaska, visiting mission sites and hearing from Alaskan leaders and missionaries. Mississippi participants in the trip included (back row, from left) Max Loper of Philadelphia and Greg and Laura Martin of Long Beach. They are pictured with Terry Hill, pastor of Rabbit Creek Community Church in Anchorage, and his wife Debbie.

About 25 attended the meeting called by Gene Triggs of Jackson. The major concern expressed was

Vacation Bible Schools

Springfield, Natchez: June 24-28; 9 a.m.-12 p.m.; ages 4 to 17.

Castlewoods, Brandon: June 23-27; 6:30-8:30 p.m., preschool through 6th grade; call (601) 992-9977 for information.

Como, Como: July 8-12; Andy Brasher, pastor; call (601) 526-5248 for information.



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Mt. Nebo, Collinsville: June 23; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; 11 a.m. worship service, Arnold Threath, former member, guest speaker; potluck lunch served at noon; afternoon service, 1:15 p.m., will include memorial services; Danny Purser, pastor.

Parkview, Leland: June 23; 11 a.m.; lunch will be followed by 1:30 p.m. service; music with Johnson Trio; Billy Purser, Collins, guest speaker; Tommy Cherry, pastor.

Palestine, Harrisville: June 23; 10:45 a.m.; following lunch, there will be a cemetery business meeting and a celebration of a note burning; Carl Burns, pastor.

Corinth, Heidelberg: July 7;

10 a.m.; dinner at noon; Johnny Brazeale, Purvis, guest speaker; 1:00 p.m. singing; Masterpeace, Laurel, guest singers; Edd Hollo-man, pastor.

Wade (Jackson): Aug. 11; combined homecoming and dedication; homecoming, 10:30 a.m.; dinner at noon; afternoon singing; dedication services for new auditorium, 2 p.m.; Rex Yancey, Pascagoula, guest speaker. W.L. (Bill) Barton, pastor.

Gatesville, Crystal Springs: June 30; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship service, 11 a.m.; Shally Vaughn, Florence, guest speaker; dinner on the grounds, 12 p.m.; afternoon singing, 1:30 p.m.; no night service; Millard Mackey, pastor.

Revival Dates

Berea (Attala): June 23-26; 7 p.m.; John Heath Hopkins, a student at Mississippi State University, evangelist; Tony Black is pastor.

Bethany, Bay Springs: June 23-27; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Gary

Felton, Lawrence, evangelist; Eddie M. Brady, pastor.

Bissell, Tupelo: June 23-26; 7:30 p.m.; Ron Herrod, evangelist; Billy Nelson, music; Jim Varnon, pastor.

Bethlehem, Pinola: June 23-26; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Ronny Robinson, executive director, Baptist Children's Village, evangelist; Hubert Greer, Wesson, music; Jerome McLendon, pastor.

Cash (Scott): June 23-28; Sunday, 10:45 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.; Mon.-Fri., 7:30 p.m.; Shannon Burns, evangelist; Edwin Pope, music; Bob Smith, pastor.

Names in the News



Smith

A Retirement reception will be held for **Roy Smith**, BSU director at Copiah-Lincoln Community College for 27 years, at the BSU Center on campus, June 23, 2-3:30 p.m.

Charlotte Causey of North Phoenix, Ariz., died May 31 from a rapidly developing cancer. She

Homecomings

Poplar Springs, Mendenhall: June 30; worship services, 10 and 11 a.m.; pot luck luncheon, 12 p.m.; afternoon singing; Benny Still, pastor.

was the wife of Joseph N. Causey, former pastor in Amory, Tupelo, and Canton. In addition to her husband, Joseph, she is survived by a son, Stephen, and a daughter, Mary Jo Tennison.

Funeral services were held May 13 for **Charles M. Cade**, song leader, deacon, and treasurer of Wahalak Church, Kemper County.

FORT WORTH (ABP) — Veteran Baptist journalist Craig Bird has been named director of public relations at Southwestern Seminary. Bird, 46, a former missionary, began work at the seminary in Fort Worth on June 10.

Martin Cuellar, instructor of piano at William Carey College, will present a series of classical music concerts in churches and theaters throughout Barcelona,



Christopher M. Jones (center) was licensed to the gospel ministry on May 26 by Bay Vista Church in Biloxi. Pictured with Jones is his wife, Lisa, and Jerry N. Watts, pastor.

Spain, in July. The concerts will be sponsored by the Baptist churches in Barcelona.

Staff Changes

Doyle Cummings, director of missions for Bolivar Association, has announced his retirement effective June 30. He has served as director of missions since Jan. 1, 1993. Prior service includes an eight-year pastorate at Second Church, Indianapolis, 13 years as pastor of Itta Bena Church, and two and a half years as pastor of Schlatter Church. Prior to seminary, he served Fellowship Church, Choctaw County. Additional service includes two terms on Mississippi Baptist Convention Board and several years as trustee at the Baptist Children's Village.



Cummings

Oakland Heights Church, Meridian, has called **Mike Russell** as pastor effective the first of May. His previous place of service was First Church, Lauderdale.



Russell

Centreville Church, Mississippi Association, has called **Daryl Emory Hall** as minister of youth effective May 26. A native of Harriman, Tenn., he received his education at East Tennessee State University and New Orleans Seminary. His previous place of service was First Church, Lyman.

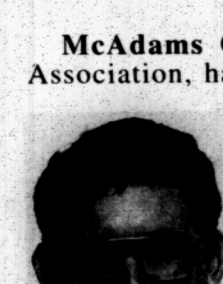
First Church, Canton, has called **John Lowe** as minister of youth and activities. Lowe is a native of Montgomery, Ala., and a recent graduate of New Orleans Seminary. He previously served as minister of youth at First Church, Norco, La.



Lowe

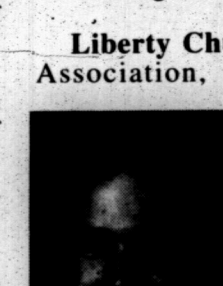
Tylertown Church, Walthall Association, has called **Kenny Adams** as minister of music effective June 9. A native of Kosciusko, he received his education at Mississippi College. His previous place of service was Mt. Zion Church.

McAdams Church, Attala Association, has called **James Young** as pastor effective June 1. A native of Thomastown, Young received his education at Mississippi College and New Orleans Seminary. He and his wife, Guinevere, were missionaries to Bangladesh for 25 years.



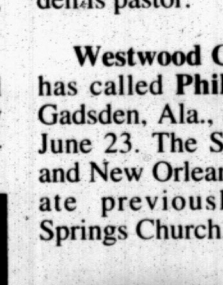
Young

Liberty Church, Mississippi Association, has called **Dan Glenn** as associate pastor and minister of students and activities effective May 19. A native of Clinton, he received his education at Mississippi State University. Martin Hayden is pastor.



Glenn

Westwood Church, Meridian, has called **Phil Wittingham** of Gadsden, Ala., as pastor, effective June 23. The Samford University and New Orleans Seminary graduate previously served Bluff Springs Church, Magnolia.



Gray

Black Jack Church, Yazoo Association, has called **Travis Gray** as pastor. He previously served Sabougla Church in Calhoun Association.

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Uniform Let wisdom guide



By David Mitchell
James 1, 3

Solomon from the Old Testament is known for his wisdom. In the New Testament, James exhibited a wisdom similar to that of Solomon. As used by James, wisdom has been described as possessing "right understanding, moral discernment, spiritual insight, responsible words, and worthy deeds." For those who desire wisdom, James said it is available.

Asking for wisdom. There is a distinct absence of wisdom in today's world. When perplexities, disappointments, and bereavements come, people need the heavenly guidance that godly wisdom gives. When one is in turmoil, James said, "let him ask God who gives to all men generously" (1:5). It is a humbling process to realize that one does not have sufficient wisdom to manage his or her immediate obstacles or opportunities. Those who desire wisdom are to ask God for this heavenly blessing in faith. Praying to God for wisdom in faith acknowledges God's omniscience. God delights in giving to those who pray in faith. Even Solomon had to pray for wisdom and in so doing found his prayer answered by God in a manner beyond anything he might have dared to ask or think.

James said "The double-minded man is unstable in all ways" (1:8). The word literally means "one who has two souls." The idea is, a person who is controlled by his feelings or passions rather than set principles. The man or woman of God takes hold of God's promises and feels with deep assurance that God will hear his or her prayer.

The power of the tongue. Speech and wisdom should go hand in hand. An unbridled tongue speaks out of a life absent of wisdom. God's teachers must exhibit wisdom by allowing him to control their tongues because they "shall be judged with greater strictness" (3:1, NIV). Teachers should carefully instruct other members and be able to rightly divide the Word of truth so that fellow members can grow in grace and in knowledge of Christ. The Bible states plainly "to whom much is given, much will be required" (Luke 12:48).

The tongue can be used to build up or to tear down, to encourage or discourage, to make or break. The majority of the teaching in James concerning control of the tongue is found here but other teachings include 1:19, 1:26, 2:12, 4:11, 4:13, 5:9, 5:12.

If anyone is able to make no mistakes in what he says then he is able to control his whole body and is perfect (3:2). Each of us proves daily that he is not perfect by what he says. James illustrated, pointing out that a horse is guided by a bit in its mouth. The bit is connected to the reins held by the master. The horse will go wherever the master directs. A ship is guided by a rudder connected to the wheel which is held by the pilot. Wherever the pilot desires the boat to travel, he can guide it with the rudder. The tongue guided by the mind can place a man wherever he wants. The tongue guided by the mind controlled by the Master can place a man wherever the Master desires for him. The tongue is small like the rudder. The bit, if used wisely, can produce great results for God.

Two kinds of wisdom. Evidence that one possesses wisdom is indicated by good behavior. The wise person shows his wisdom by his good life. "Selfish ambition" is false wisdom — obviously not a gift from God, but rather unspiritual and devilish (3:15). James clearly stated that there are two types of wisdom, one from above and one of the earth. The sentiment here is the same as in Psalms 11:10 "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." True wisdom brings peace and happiness to the believer. It does not lead to a life that is fragmented, but rather to a whole-hearted obedience to God. True wisdom is exemplified in the life that has principles, standards, and knows where it is headed.

An internal exam to determine if one has wisdom can be accomplished by determining if righteousness and peace are a by-product of one's life. These are evidence that real wisdom is present in the life of a believer. God's wisdom is available to those who ask in faith. It is not limited to the extremely intelligent or highly educated, but rather is a gift to all from God.

Mitchell is pastor of Van Winkle Church, Jackson.

Bible Book Worship and leadership



By Clayton Littlejohn
Malachi 2, 4

God's charges against the priest and people illustrate the importance of dedication to God in the areas of worship, leadership, and marriage. In this text it is recorded that God pointed out, condemned, and warned Israel for unacceptable worship, unworthy leaders, and unhealthy marriages. We Christians need this message proclaimed in our churches today as much as Israel did in Malachi's day.

Unacceptable worship (1:6-9). In this text God spoke directly to the priest, yet the message was for all of Israel (1:1). God asked the priest, "Where is my honor?"

He illustrated that a son would honor his father and a slave would honor his master, yet as Israel's Father and Master, he was receiving no honor from them.

I think about my father and I am moved emotionally when I reflect on the love, sincerity, and commitment he has made to my mother and my siblings. I desire to give him honor and respect in return. Israel didn't feel that way towards God. They despised his name — the name which represents God's nature and character — thus they despised God himself.

How did they dishonor and despise God? By offering polluted bread upon God's altar (v. 7). The word "bread" is actually translated "meat" (v. 8), and verifies the act of sacrificing polluted offerings. In their hypocrisy the Israelites asked, "Wherein have we despised thy name?" (v. 6). It's a wonder that God didn't strike them down on the spot. His love for them was revealed in his patience with them.

The same is true today, yet I don't know how long God's patience will tolerate much of the unacceptable worship in many churches. True worship of God is an emotional expression that leads to a godly action. Much of the emotional expressions we see today do not lead to godly actions, but rather to chaos. Worship is to be done decently and in order (1 Cor. 14:40). It doesn't matter how good it feels, if your worship does not follow God's guidelines given in his Word, then it is in vain.

Unworthy leaders (2:8-9). The priests had failed to keep their part in the covenant God had made with them, thus this set God free from his part of the covenant which included health, prosperity and special blessings on the Levitical priests. How had the priests become so unworthy?

1) "Ye departed out of the way." Now they led and worshiped their own way. God's way has always been the only way and still is today (John 14:6).

2) "Ye have caused many to stumble at the law." Any time someone is led off God's pathway, he will stumble over Satan's potholes.

3) "Ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi." This covenant referred to those true, faithful Levites who had been true to God. Their corruption led the people to despise the priests (v. 9), because the priests had despised God. This sequence of events illustrates that people desire to really know and worship God. They just need the right leadership.

Unhealthy marriages (2:13-16). Divorce was permitted in the nation of Israel. It was against God's will, and thus God would not hear the prayers of his people. For practically no reason at all, the Jewish men were divorcing their wives and marrying younger ones. They saw nothing wrong with this practice, and couldn't understand why God would refuse their offerings and many lamentations (v. 13).

God's intention in marriage is for the two partners to become one (Gen. 2:24), and he reminded the Israelites of this intent in verse 15. The purpose of his intent is so that the husband and wife can raise godly children who will continue to worship and lead people to God. In verse 16, God said, "He hateth putting away," which means God hates divorce. He does not hate divorced people, as the new Contemporary English Version Bible states. We in our churches need to seek to minister to those who have been through divorce.

God's charges against the priests and people illustrate the importance of dedication to God in the areas of worship, leadership, and marriage.

Littlejohn is pastor of Ingram Church, Baldwin.

Life and Work Avoid judgmentalism



By Linda Donnell
Romans 14, 15

In reading God's Word, we find there are some things that are unquestionably right and there are some things that are unquestionably wrong. But then there are still many other things about which there is no clear-cut answer as to their rightness or wrongness before God. These "questions of conscience" may become the source of serious problems among Christians and divert us away from our primary focus of reaching people. Paul saw this happening in the church at Rome and offered some principles directed toward alleviating disunity among its members.

Ease up (Rom. 14:1, 13-18). The apostle advised the Roman Christians to ease up and not be so critical of those with differing opinions in regard to "disputable matters" (v. 1). Being critical and judgmental is part of the human nature. Christians are certainly not exempt from this temperament — especially when people do not view things in the same way as we do. The story is told of the first meeting between D.L. Moody and Charles Spurgeon, the two most famous preachers during the 19th century. Moody traveled to London to meet his professional mentor and was greatly shocked when the man he most admired answered the door with a cigar in his mouth.

"How could you, a man of God, smoke?" Moody questioned.

"The same way you, a man of God, could be fat!" Spurgeon answered with a smile and a finger on the rather large stomach of the American evangelist.

Paul suggested that Christians should forget about what is right or wrong for others and to be more concerned about not doing anything that might be a stumbling block for those around us (v. 13). If our lives are guided by love, as taught by Christ, we will not distress another's conscience in the things which do not really matter. God's kingdom is not so much a matter of what you "put in your stomach," but rather "righteousness" in our relations to others and the "peace and joy" which result from true spiritual fellowship (v. 17). Our task is to single-mindedly serve Christ and in so doing we will please God and prove our worth to those around us (v. 18).

Build up (Rom. 15:1-4). After urging the weak not to condemn the strong and the strong not to tempt or needlessly offend the weak, he now directs both groups to show mutual forbearance and love. He specifically charged those who are strong in the faith to step in and help those who falter (v. 1). We would all do well to remember that in Christ strength is for service, not status. We should constantly be looking beyond ourselves to others with the question: "How can I help?"

The apostle reminds us that our pattern for helping others and living in harmony comes from Jesus Christ. He did not take the easy way and avoid the troubles of others. The Scriptures tell us that he "took on the troubles of the troubled" (v. 3). What have you done recently that has led "to peace and to mutual edification" among members of your church?

Forgetting self and building up others is no easy task. Paul reminds us that studying the Scriptures can offer us help and encouragement in this regard.

Lift up (Rom. 15:5-7). As we follow Christ's example, our fellowship with one another should be marked by harmony. There will always be differences of opinion; after all, we are all made differently and are at differing stages of spiritual maturity. Nevertheless, we should constantly strive toward unity. We must get beyond the way of thinking that unless everyone sees as we do, they must be wrong. If we can just keep our focus on Christ, we can realize that the God who unites us is far greater than the differences that divide us.

As we follow Christ's example and accept each other, we will strengthen unity in the church and in turn bring praise to God. May our prayer be that the Lord will direct us more toward unity as we interact daily with others.

Donnell is a member of First Church, Hattiesburg.

THE VILLAGE VIEW

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A portion of **The Village View** is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful and helpful medium. This feature is hopefully designed to further honor, with taste and respect, those who are and have been special to our special friends.

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(to be continued)

Awards and Achievements — 1995-1996 School Year

Annie Carroll — Reedy Acres: Received a Red Ribbon for competing in the Creative Writing Essay Contest sponsored by the Woodman of America. Received a certificate for Honor Roll.

Mary Carroll — Reedy Acres Campus: An officer in the Jr. High FHA.

Letisha Coleman — Deanash Campus: Office and Library Assistant at Stone County High School; Participated in The District Bible Drill.

Pam Collins — India Nunnery: Received a Counselor Award and a Certificate for Perfect Attendance at Sumner Hill High School.

Vanessa Coursey — Deanash Campus: Received several Student of the Week Awards; Student of the Month in May; Received an award for Personal Skills & Computer Applications; Received a Certificate of Award for "Mean and Ugly" WBC Model of blood cells; Outstanding member of FHA; Her Choir placed 2nd in the nation for it's category at a competition at Disney World.

Joanna Graves — Farrow Manor Campus: Received an Achievement Award for the 4 — H Manners Club and Honor Roll at East Tate Elementary School.

Joshua Graves — Farrow Manor Campus: Received an "A — B" Honor Roll Certificate for the 1995 — 1996 School year.

Dawn Graves — Deanash Campus: Stone County Middle School Science Fair Participant; Received a Certificate of Appreciation for participating in The National Assessment Educational Program Test; Received 6 Awards of Student of the Week; Participated in the 5th annual Performing Arts Workshop at MGCC at Perkinston.

Jay Henry — Farrow Manor Campus: Won Church Bible Drill at Mt. Zion Baptist Church and competed in the Associational Bible Drill.

Zack Herrington — India Nunnery Campus: Received a Certificate for Honor Roll and Perfect Attendance.

Natasha Hutcheson — Farrow Manor Campus: Honor Roll at Independence Jr. High School.

Lovenia Johnson — India Nunnery Campus: 1996 Graduate of Clinton High School. She plans to

attend Hinds Community College in the Fall.

Regina McElveen — Deanash Campus: Made a Profession of Faith and was baptized April 14th at FBC Wiggins.

Pauline McGowan — Deanash Campus: Entered school late at Stone County Middle School making great effort, good grades and received complimentary remarks for her progress from her teachers.

Beth McQueen — India Nunnery Campus: 1996 Graduate of Clinton High School. She plans to attend Hinds Community College in the Fall.

Stephanie Norton — India Nunnery Campus: received a VIP Certificate for being a Very Important Person.

Angela Patten — Deanash Campus: Was a member of the FHA and was elected Most Friendly at Stone County High School.

Bobby Pomeroy — Farrow Manor Campus: Voted Friendliest and Most Athletic at Independence High School; IHS Team Awards: At the DeSoto County Tribune Relays on March 30, Bobby placed 1st in the 3200 M Run and 3rd in the 800 M run. At the MHSAA District II Track Meet on April 18 he placed 5th in the 3200 M run.

Eddie Pomeroy — Farrow Manor Campus: Awarded a Certificate for competing in the NWCC Math Competition at Independence Jr. High School.

Thomas Ray — Reedy Acres Campus: Won a Red Ribbon for participating in the Creative Writing Essay Contest sponsored by the Modern Woodman of America; Had perfect attendance.

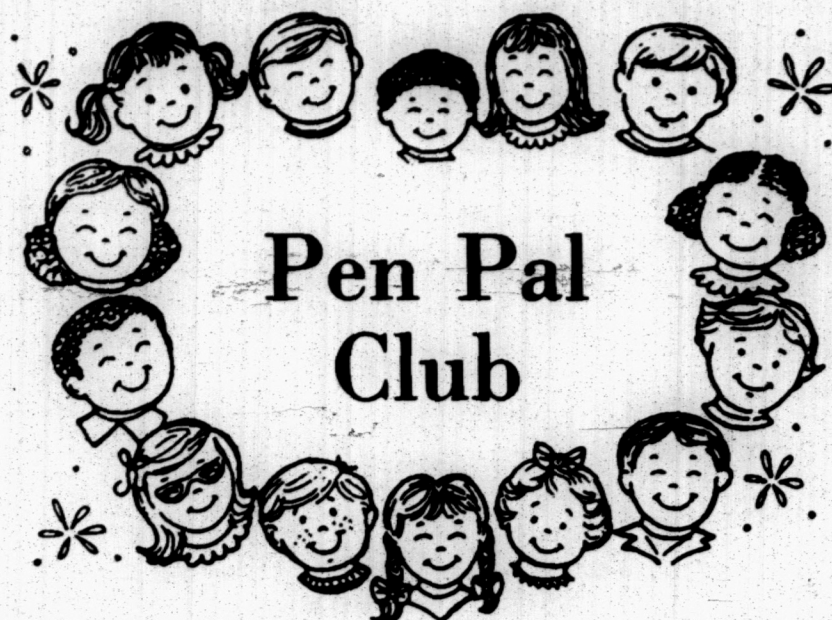
Chris Seddon — India Nunnery Campus: Received a VIP Certificate for being a Very Important Person.

Jessica Sykes — Deanash Campus: Graduated from Stone County High School; Member and Historian of FHA; Member of the FCA; Student of the Week several times; Received U.S. History Award and plaque.

Jennifer Ward — Deanash Campus: Made a Profession of Faith and was Baptized April 14th at FBC Wiggins.



Lovenia Johnson



Dear Pen Pal Club:

Hi. My name is Wesley Parker. I am 6. I have two sisters and one brother. My hobbies are riding my bike, playing soccer, going swimming, and skating. A boy or girl can write. Write to:
30258 Liberty Rd.
Nettleton, MS 38858

a pen pal, boy or girl. My hobbies are reading, 4-H, and roller skating. I am a Christian and attend First Church of Oloh. I have one sister, age 13. We are home-schooled by our mom. I hope to hear from someone soon.
8664 U.S. Hwy. 98
Sumrall, MS 39482

Dear Pen Pal Club:

Hi. My name is Kayla Parker. I will be in the fourth grade. My birthday is Dec. 31, 1986. I have four brothers. I have two sisters. My hobbies are talking on the phone with my friends, skating, swimming, and listening to music (not country). When I get older, I want to sing music. Please write soon. Write to:
30258 Liberty Rd.
Nettleton, MS 38858
P.S. I go to Liberty Church.

Dear Pen Pal Club:

Hi, my name is Parker Yarbrough and I am 6 years old. My mother has to help me write this letter, but with time and patience I will soon be able to write a letter by myself. I like to fish, play T-ball, and play with my friends at church and school. I have a rat terrier named Buck. I have one sister named Carrie. I attend Children's House Montessori, where I will be in the first grade. I joined the summer reading club at my church. My goal is to read 60 books. Hope to hear from a new friend soon. Write to me at:
200 7th N.
Columbus, MS 39701

Dear Pen Pal Club:

Hi! My name is Brittany Smith. I'm 9 years old and going into the fourth grade. My birthday is Oct. 22, 1986. I have one brother and his name is Austin. He is 16. I had a cat which his name was Sandy, but he ran away a month ago. My hobbies are playing basketball, playing with my Game Boy, reading, playing with my friends. A boy or girl will do. Please send a picture of yourself if you have one. Write to:

Rt. 2, Box 218
Prentiss, MS 39474

Dear Pen Pal Club:

My name is Vicki Tagert. I am 10 years old. I would like to have

Dear Pen Pal Club:

Hey! My name is Lesley Autumn Tucker. I am 16 years old and I go to Pleasant Grove Christian Academy. My hobbies are: shopping, listening to the '60s and '70s rock music, roller skating, playing pool, and collecting old records. I own one dog. Her name is Dixie. I don't mind how old you are, or if you are male or female. Please write to me at:
Rt. 1, Box 293-A
Carthage, MS 39051

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TNTPSTO ERJTT: EVTOWT

This week's clue: R equals H.

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: James Two: Twenty.

CHILDREN'S PAGE

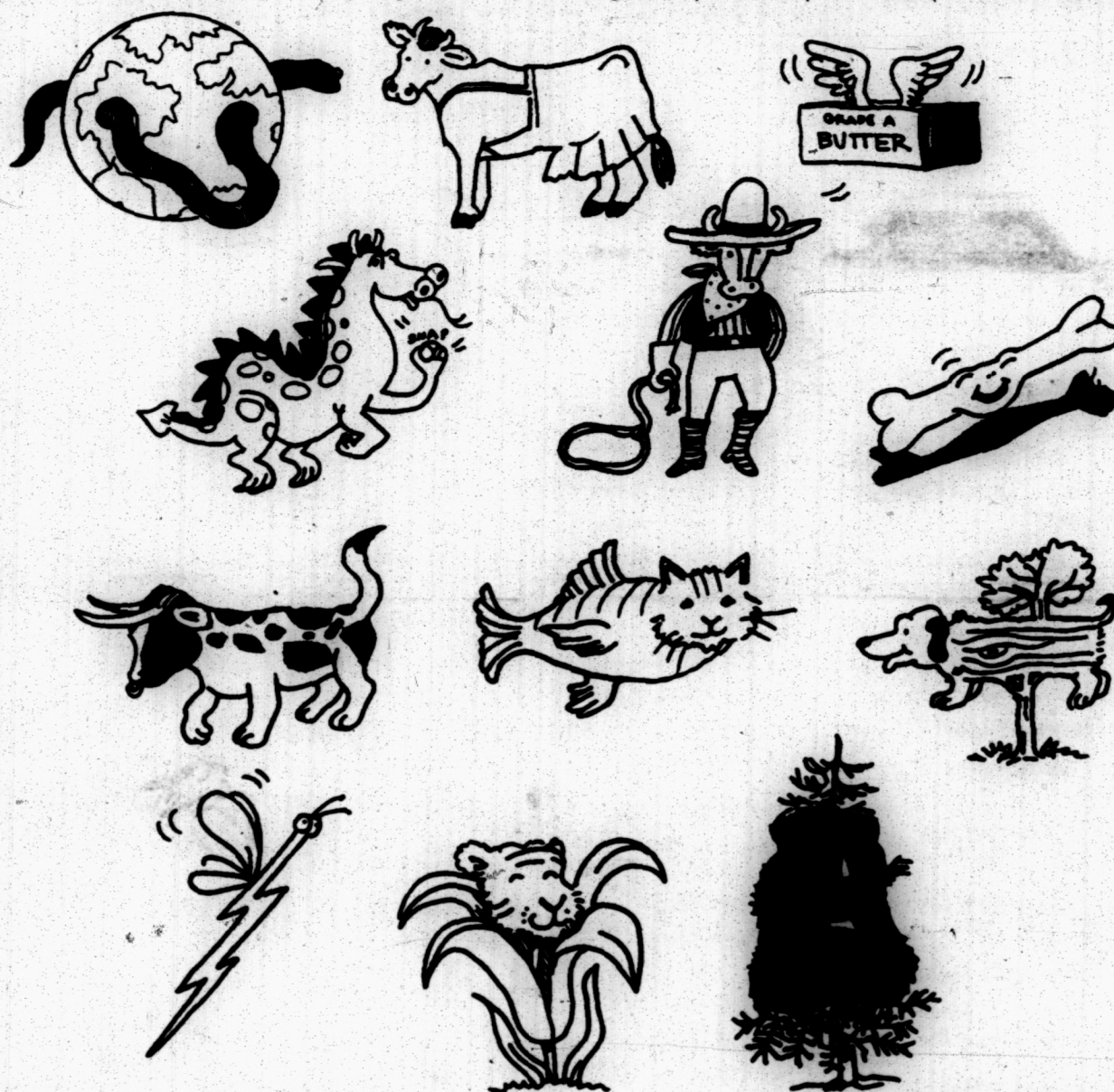
Successful collection

RAs of First Church, Maben, recently collected aluminum cans to raise over \$300 for the Opportunity Now Fund for Disaster Relief. The fund is a national RA project of the Brotherhood Commission in Memphis. According to Paul Harrell, director of the Brotherhood Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, money collected for the fund will go to upgrade equipment — such as cameras, fax machines, computers, and satellite telephone links — used by the Brotherhood's Disaster Relief ministry.



Crazy Creations

God has a great sense of humor. He made everything pictured on this page — only not quite as silly. Can you guess the real thing each picture represents? (Answers below)



Source: *Solving Bible Mysteries* by Joy MacKenzie (Zondervan Publishing House, 1994), available at your local book store or by calling (800) 727-3480.

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